



# viewpoints

SPRING 2024

Volume 54 Issue 2



Mark your calendar for GMIA's Art & Garden Tour on Sunday, April 28. Five unique gardens will be open to tour. Spend an enjoyable afternoon gathering design ideas, viewing original landscaping and learning which plants flourish in our region. Parents are welcome to bring their children, but the gardens cannot accommodate strollers. No pets, please.

Three of the gardens will be accessible through a shuttle van. To board the van, park your car in the lot by the fire station at 10105 Vivera Drive. The gardens are less busy later in the afternoon, so consider starting your tour in mid-afternoon. You'll find a map and a description of the gardens inside this newsletter.

This event is open to GMIA members only. Please check page 8 of this newsletter to ensure your membership is current. If it has expired, you can renew online by going to [gmia.net](http://gmia.net), or you can mail your payment to GMIA, P.O. Box 2751, La Mesa, CA 91943-2751. You can also join GMIA or renew your membership by paying \$20 per year per household, on the day of the tour.

If you would like to help GMIA put on this event, please contact us at [gmiavolunteer@gmail.com](mailto:gmiavolunteer@gmail.com). We need volunteers to check in people at the gardens, assist with traffic, and assist those visiting the gardens. ▲

## New County Supervisor to Speak at GMIA Annual Dinner

GMIA's Annual Dinner will be held Saturday, June 22 at the Cuyamaca College Student Center. Our keynote speaker will be District 4's new supervisor, Monica Montgomery-Steppe.

Those of you who attended last year's dinner know the Cuyamaca College Student Center is a beautiful venue. It features a terrace for drinks and chatting with friends and neighbors, and a large room surrounded with glass where the dinner is held.

GMIA wants to thank the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District for partnering with us for a second year so we can hold the dinner at Cuyamaca College. We also want to thank EDCO Disposal, which has again agreed to be a major sponsor for the dinner.

Information about registering for the dinner will be available in the next newsletter. Hope to see you there! ▲



GROSSMONT-MT. HELIX  
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

### Officers

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Pam Coe, Treasurer/Membership  
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| Leslie Gardner   | Holly Yarris    |
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| Vaughn Jeffery   |                 |

**Viewpoints is a community newsletter published by the Grossmont – Mt. Helix Improvement Association. Letters to the Editor should be sent to P. O. Box 2751, La Mesa, CA 91943-2751.**

*This newsletter reflects the efforts of your entire Board of Directors.*

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Linda Miller

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**www.gmia.net**

Email us at:  
**yourgmianeighbor@gmail.com**

### MISSION

GMIA is an 85-year-old nonprofit 501(c)4 public benefit membership organization. Our mission is to preserve and enhance the character and quality of the community and foster pride in the area. We do not employ a paid staff and are served by an all-volunteer board.

## President's Message

The GMIA board has been spending a lot of time lately doing a deep dive into our budget and finances. We pride ourselves on being an all-volunteer organization, and we try to keep costs as low as possible when putting on events. However, like everyone else, our expenses are rising and we're analyzing how our money is being spent.

Our treasurer, Pam Coe, put together a comparison of our budgets over the past five years. During that time, our operating expenses (not including our annual events) have increased roughly 29%, while our income from dues and other sources increased about 13%. Most of our operating expenses come from putting out Viewpoints, and the design, printing and mailing costs connected with the quarterly newsletter.

The costs for our annual events – the Walk to the Top, Art & Garden Tour, Annual Dinner, and the Succulent Swap – have also risen, but we are still able to offer all but the Annual Dinner for free thanks to the efforts put in by our board members and volunteers.

The GMIA board is looking for creative ways to raise funds. For our 2023 Annual Dinner, GMIA made a small profit for the first time thanks to sponsorships from EDCO Disposal and the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District, which provided the beautiful venue for the dinner at Cuyamaca College. EDCO and the college district have agreed to renew their sponsorships for this year's annual dinner to be held June 22.

We plan to approach other sponsors and government entities to develop additional sponsorships. If you know of a business that might be willing to become a GMIA sponsor, please contact us at [yourgmianeighbor@gmail.com](mailto:yourgmianeighbor@gmail.com).

Thank you for your support of GMIA. Your membership dues support our efforts to improve our community so that it will continue to be a great place to live. Be sure to check your mailing address on this newsletter to find out if you need to renew your membership.

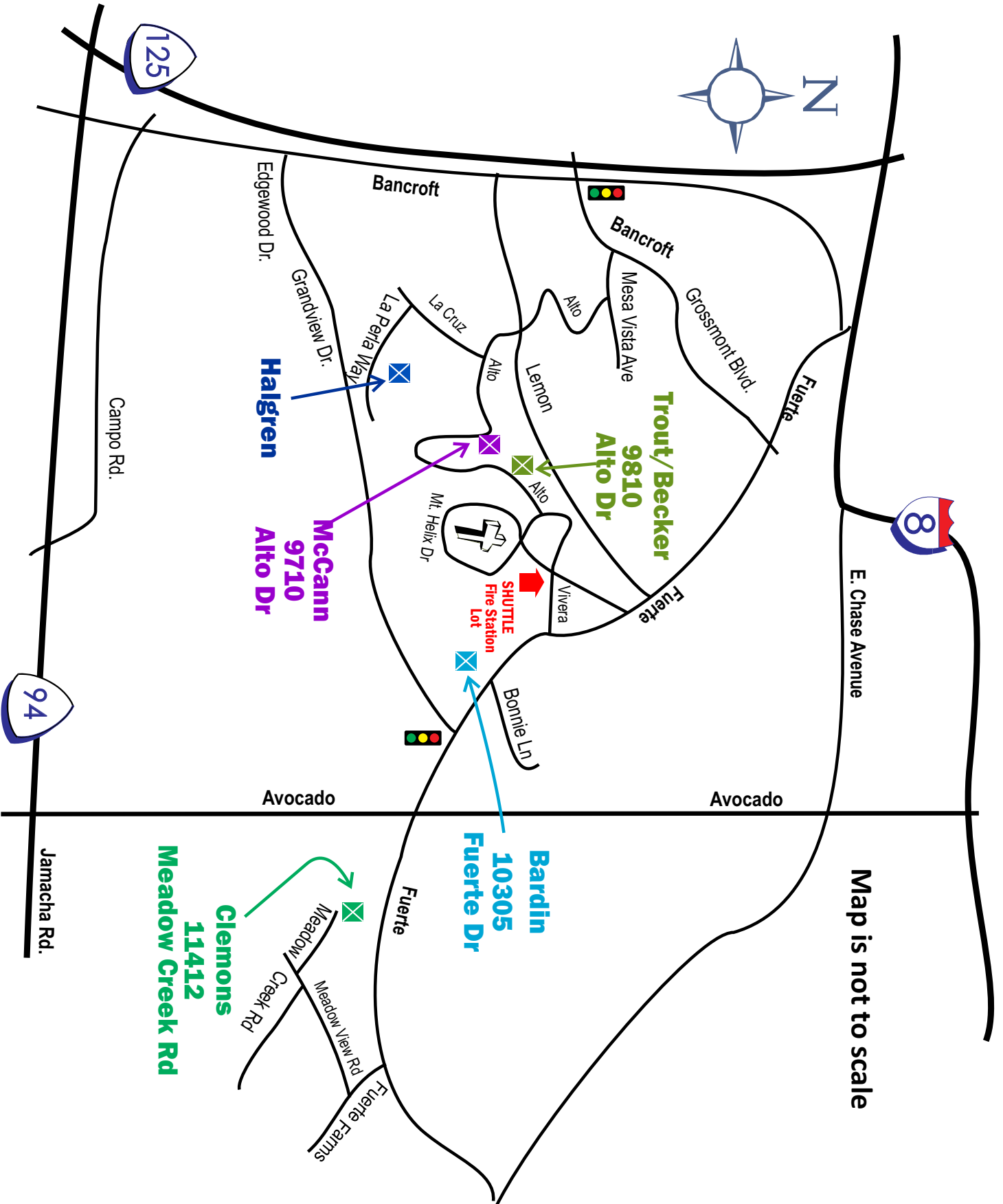
See you at the Art & Garden Tour! 🏔️



## Thank You Donors!

Special thanks to these members who donated \$25 or greater in excess of their dues.

Dean and Judith Allen  
Christine Rodriguez Brown  
Ken Bullock  
Paul and Sandy Golden  
Ray Hartmayer  
Henry Jordan & Daniel Lamb  
Jeannie & Martin Rice  
John and Valerie Richardson





## The Garden of Donald & Dianne McCann

### 9710 Alto Drive

#### STOP #1 - Shuttle Access Only

The McCanns' charming yellow cottage, spread dramatically along a narrow .75-acre parcel, is surrounded by an enchanting garden, an inviting pool and beautiful views to the north. For nearly 30 years, they have personalized their home, incorporating their love of entertaining to include a beautiful dining area, comfortable seating around the pool, a shuffleboard court, a beautiful rock waterfall feature, and a garden shed with a unique story. Older trees with cut limbs are adorned with potted and draping succulents. Nothing is lost to the eye in this garden, just a new treasure around each corner, combining new and old. Plantings include numerous varieties of succulents, hydrangeas, roses, a variety of bushes, and trees.



## The Garden of Jonathan Becker & Tere Trout

### 9810 Alto Drive

#### STOP #2 - Shuttle Access Only

The owners, who have hosted many Succulent Swaps in their former residence, acquired this property with spectacular views four years ago and immediately set about planting it with cuttings brought from their previous property. Most of the yard was grass and dirt with very little landscaping. With vision and creativity, they have transformed it into a truly

unique and stunning garden, filled with potted succulents and clever use of rocks and art. The variety, mix and design of their many succulent displays throughout this exciting garden are extraordinary. Prepare for a unique and thrilling tour, with many ideas to be gathered from behind the gate.





## The Garden of Mary Clemons

11412 Meadow Creek Road

**Drive yourself- Plenty of Accessible Parking**

The owner of this unique property is a longtime GMIA member, a landscape designer and artist, who has been creating and transforming this half-acre plus garden for many years. It is rare to find a parcel on Mt. Helix that is level, and Mary has created many surprising and delightful areas to wander through with interesting and useful ideas to pique the interest of every gardener. From succulent plantings and vegetables to an English garden, the delightful placement of garden art, unusual planting combinations, and secret areas to discover and explore around every corner, every gardener will find delight and inspiration in this unusual garden.



## The Garden of Guy and Laurie Halgren

**Drive yourself - Plenty of parking available in a dirt lot on the property.**

Guy and Laurie's garden has been on the Tour a few times over the last 30 years, most recently in 2015. It is constantly evolving so we guarantee it won't look like the garden you saw before. The garden is organized into sections by type of plant. Start your visit in the rose garden, featuring over 75 bushes. Work your way up hill through the azalea and camellia glen and Woofer Field, a full-size whiffle ball stadium. Make your way to the backyard for the tropical-themed pool, citrus orchard, stone fruit orchard, vegetable garden, olive grove and vineyard. Guy makes his own wine and recently added 5 varieties of grapes for a total of 250 vines. He also planted 50 olive trees for both oil and curing. Guy has personally planted every plant on the property except for three trees that came with the house in 1985 and does almost all the care himself.





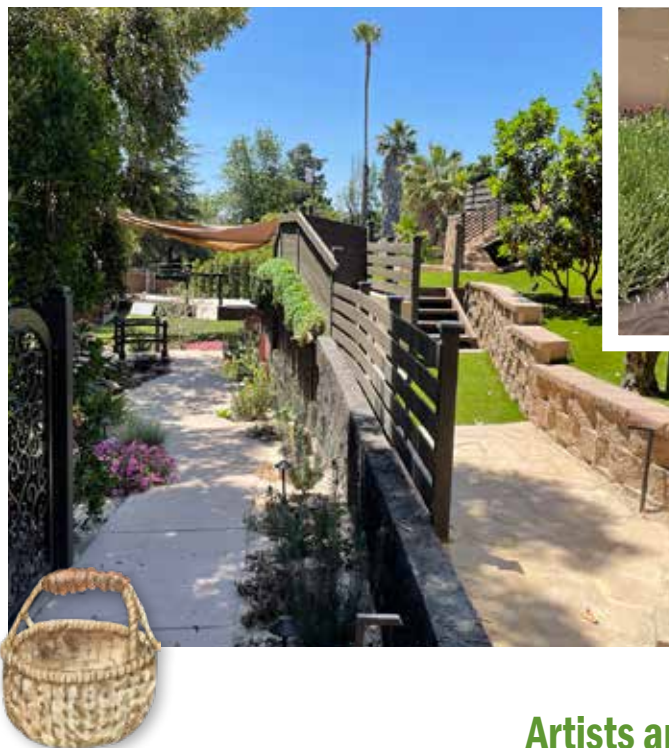
## The Garden of Bob and Kimberly Bardin

10305 Fuerte Drive

STOP #3 Shuttle Access Only

Welcome to "The Treetop Resort," a tri-level garden paradise spanning one acre, meticulously designed for water conservation, erosion control, and low maintenance. The garden features trails, stairs, slides, and pathways weaving through themed gardens inviting a journey of play and reflection. Treehouse Trail leads to a garden room called the Treehouse, offering views of the valley and Mt. Helix tree tops symbolizing the home's name. Highlights include whimsical statues that can't help but make you smile, a courtyard creek

encircling an island, a pool, pavilion, fireplace, cabana game room, children's playground, mini-golf, bolder breezeway, a hobbit house, a western town, plumeria row, an orchard, and space for pickleball, and RV hosting. The garden serves as a backdrop for making memories and a tribute to the joy of family, and the beauty of integrating nature with imaginative landscapes. Watch closely, or you'll miss the unique features, like the hippo!



## Artists and Musicians

This year GMIA is excited to feature more artists and musicians on the 2024 Art & Garden Tour. We have many of the same artists and musicians from last year, as well as some wonderful new additions.

**ARTISTS:** **Roz Oserin** is an American landscape and mixed media artist featuring themes of people and places from around the world, both in realism and abstract work. **Connie Grace** and **Sharon Meng** (mother-daughter) are both returning to display their portraits, masterfully rendered in color pencil. Suzi Sterling will be back with her beautiful handmade glass enamel and metal bowls. **Deborah Wolfe** is also returning with

her bright and bold watercolor landscapes.

New this year is local artist **Brian Johnson** who will be showing off his hand poured terracotta pots and artwork. **Joshua Rios** is a new addition to the garden tour and will be displaying his abstract expressionism oil paintings.

**MUSICIANS:** Local Mt. Helix favorite **Jinnah Williams Foster** will be back with her acoustic guitar and vocals, covering classic and contemporary songs. We also have **Marcus Schreiber**, a singer and songwriter who writes music based on feelings and life experiences. 🌱



## Groundbreaking for New Library

The Friends of the Casa de Oro Library is pleased to announce a contract has been signed by EC Constructors Inc. and the County of San Diego to design and build our new Casa de Oro library. Construction will begin Winter 2024, with a completion date of Spring 2026. To see the design concept, leave a comment, ask a question, or complete a library survey, please go to [www.sdcl.org/newcasabranh/](http://www.sdcl.org/newcasabranh/).

Located at 9610 Campo Road (across from The Hub pickleball courts), the new library will be approximately 12,000 sq ft and will include:

- 2,000 sq ft Community Room with after-hours access for community events
- High speed internet access and Wi-Fi throughout the branch
- Study rooms
- Teen area with study rooms
- Children's area with early-literacy play equipment
- Patio space
- Public computers plus laptops for check out
- Friends of the Library Bookstore

- Designated parking lot

While we await our new library, your Friends of the Casa de Oro Library nonprofit organization continues to provide extensive programs at our current location next to the post



office on Campo Road. Through fundraising efforts, we are able to sponsor a wide variety of activities for children, teens and adults scheduled throughout the year. Stop by the library for current information or go online to [www.sdcl.org](http://www.sdcl.org) and check out "events" for the branch. ▲



## Starting the Year with a Walk to the Top

It was a crisp, sunny winter day on January 6 when about 360 people and pets joined together to follow the Grossmont High School Marching Band to the top of Mt. Helix. The walk that covers less than two miles round-trip began at the San Miguel Fire Station on Vivera Dr. At the top, walkers were met with live music, treats for humans and dogs, hot and cold drinks, those amazing views, and plenty of information that is useful to our community. Thanks to GMIA Board Members Gwen DeHaven and Lidia Chang for leading the effort, and all the other board members and volunteers who helped make the event a success.

Do you want to help at next year's walk or at the GMIA Garden Tour, Annual Dinner or Succulent Swap? Please contact us at [yourgmianeighbor@gmail.com](mailto:yourgmianeighbor@gmail.com). ▲

## Senior Gleaners: Picking Fruit for the Community

If you have a tree full of ripe fruit—or you'd like to help pick fruit so it will feed someone—check out Senior Gleaners of San Diego County. The group, a volunteer organization with a mission to address community hunger, needs more people to help pick fruit going to waste after rains have delayed picking hundreds of trees.



The group has hundreds of trees scheduled to be picked, especially in East County and the Fallbrook area, with hundreds more waiting to be scheduled. The group also needs people who can haul several filled banana boxes of fruit in their own vehicle. Most deliveries are within 10 miles of the picking site.

Most gleaners volunteer 3-4 hours one day per week, but there are no required minimum commitments. Volunteers join crews working near where they live. Some volunteers form small groups that work independently and set their own schedule.

To learn more about the group, visit: [www.seniorgleaners-sdco.org](http://www.seniorgleaners-sdco.org) or call 619-633-9180. ▲





P. O. Box 2751  
La Mesa CA 91943-2751

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To ensure your membership is current: please look at your mailing label on this newsletter. On it you will find the expiration date of your membership. Family membership is just \$20 (2 years - \$40; 3 years - \$60). You may renew online at our secure website [www.gmia.net](http://www.gmia.net) or mail your payment in the attached envelope to GMIA, P.O. Box 2751, La Mesa, CA 91943-2751.

Note: if the date is June 2024 or later, your dues are paid in full, but you are welcome to renew in advance.

## Pick Up and Clean the Park and Ride

Do you ever use one of our convenient CalTrans Park and Ride areas? You may notice they can get a little messy at times. It's easy to help clean it up! And it takes less than an hour when GMIA hosts a monthly clean up on the third Saturday of every month. They meet at the Park and Ride on Bancroft, near Interstate 8 and the Fuerte Drive exit.

Board member Pete Camana and local resident John Richardson bring everything you need including pick-up sticks, bags, rakes, brooms and gloves. They start at 9 a.m. and are usually done within an hour. Bring your hat and your own gloves if you prefer. Want more information or to help?

Call PeteA at 619-980-3340. He will be glad to hear from you!

## CALENDAR

Sat., April 13, 2024

Cleanup 9 am PARK N  
RIDE - I8/ Severin Dr.

Sat., April 28, 2024

GMIA  
Art & Garden Tour

Sun., June 22, 2024

GMIA Annual Dinner